

Class Notes September 11, 2012

Masks:

Masks are invisible layers that allow you to adjust and readdress individual aspects of those layers.

If you directly edit just a layer such as using the image adjustments panel, you can't go back once the image is saved.

If you develop a workflow using masks instead of straightforward adjustments this lets you have access to all the original parts of your image. Masks also allow you to save a selection.

Option – click will show the mask. You must have the mask selected to edit it. If you need to get under the mask in order to make another part of the mask transparent you can go to image.

Adjustment layers are, essentially layers with just masks on them. An adjustment layer allows you to adjust a specific aspect of the image such as contrast, saturation, and apply that to specific areas underneath the adjustment layer using masks.

If you use the refine – edge tool, you can output the results to a new layer with mask. This gives you a ready-made mask that has the advanced selection applied to it. You can then copy that mask, inverted if you need to, and apply it to other parts of your image, such as an adjustment layer.

Blending modes

Blending modes are adjustments made to each layer that alter the way each layer is affected by the layers under it in a more complex way than the opacity slider alone can provide. When a blending mode is applied the computer uses a complex algorithm to decide what the blending effects of those two layers will be. For a detailed description of blending modes and what they do, see the attached sheet in the Photoshop tutorial section of the wiki. As a note, blending modes can be used with tools like clone stamp, brushes, and any sort of mask. Caution! Do not use a straight blending mode adjustment. It is easy to spot and can come across like a simple filter. Use blending modes for specific adjustments, for experimentation as you're developing an idea, and use them sparingly.

Content aware fill.

Content – aware fill is available under the edit menu. This method of filling a selection allows the computer to extrapolate from the areas around the selection and remove what is selected. What's left is what the computer thinks will be in the void. The

computer uses areas adjacent to the selection line to guess what is in that space. Content aware fill is most useful when there is an object on an organic background. It does not tend to work when the background is a pattern or specific object.

Clone stamp tool

Clone stamp tool is used to move a specific group of pixels to another area of the image. It is similar to copying and pasting but is used like a brush. To select a point that you're going to copy from you hold down the option key and click after selecting the clone stamp tool in the toolbar. After releasing the option key the next point you click will set the distance from that previously selected point in that distance will remain the same as you paint moving the selection point around in tandem with the brush. To effectively use the clone stamp to keep varying the origin selection point as you paint so that the results do not appear directly copied.

History brush tool.

The history brush tool is available right below the clone stamp tool. It allows you to "paint" back through history the of your document. For example, if you change the saturation of your image you may then used history brush tool to paint backwards in time on a portion of your image in order to restore color to that portion. Remember, once you save your image the history is erased and you will not be able to go back through history. This is why in some cases masks are a better option.